DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 079 778 CS 500 344

AUTHOR Anderson, James A.
TITLE Analysis of Media Utilization by Urbans and Non-Urbans.
PUB DATE Apr 73
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (Montreal, April 25-29, 1973)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS Audiences; *Information Sources; Journalism; *Mass Media; *News Media; Newspapers; Periodicals; *Programing (Broadcast); Radio; Rural Areas; *Rural Urban Differences; Television; Television Viewing; Urban Studies
IDENTIFIERS *Entertainment (Mass Media)

ABSTRACT

The uses of television, radio, newspapers, and magazines by urban and rural respondents differ markedly over the range of entertainment, news, and information functions. As entertainment, television ranks highest in use by all 574 respondents. However, non-urban residents in large numbers favor radio as entertainment and as a news source. Magazines were shown to be the prime information source for all respondents. In sum, urban residents generally favored television, first, and print sources, second, for entertainment, news, and information. Non-urban residents told of heavy reliance upon television for all functions. (CH)

FILMED FROM BEST AVAILABLE COPY

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED 079778

# ANALYSIS OF MEDIA UTILIZATION

BY

URBANS AND NON-URBANS

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
James A. Anderson
TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER

by

James A. Anderson

International Communication Association
April 24-28, 1973
Montreal, Canada

CS 500 344

ABSTRACT

This study investigated differences in uses of mass media by urban and non-urban respondents. These differences were tested over entertainment, news, and information functions that the media may have and content preferences for television, radio, and newspapers. The data were collected in household interviews from 574 urban and non-urban respondents. The findings were:

Entertainment Functions

1. Urban and non-urban respondents differ in their sources of entertainment. Although television is by far the most popular entertainment medium for both groups, urbans show substantially greater usage of recordings and non-urbans of radio.

2. Radio appears to be an intimate, personal medium with the audience seeking content which removes them from the pressures of social interaction.

3. Television on the other hand appears to be a very social medium with the audience seeking social intercourse.

News Functions

4. In news, the differences between the two groups were found in the urban's greater use of print and the non-urban's greater use of radio as news sources.

5. Television appears to be the major source of world news. Newspapers show strongly in local news; but no medium had clear superiority in state news. State news coverage appears to be a prime area for exploitation.

Information Functions

6. Urban's heavier use of print showed up again in the analysis of information functions. Surprisingly, non-urbans make heavy use of television as an information source.

7. Magazines were shown to be the prime information source followed by television, newspapers, and radio. Radio showed almost no usage as an informational source.

# ANALYSIS OF MEDIA UTILIZATION

# BY

# URBANS AND NON-URBANS

In recent months there has been considerable interest in the media utilization processes exhibited by urban residents particularly the urban poor. The excellent series of reports associated with Greenberg et al. is a good example. Networks have moved toward tailoring programming more toward the urban dweller as these individuals represent more favorable buying characteristics for the advertisers. Finally, cable television is moving rapidly into the major markets with designs for local access programming directed toward individual segments of the urban audience.

While in no way discounting the importance of the urban audience, large segments of the United States still remain predominately rural in character. While proportionately small, the rural audience is large in absolute terms. Large enough to maintain programs, cut from the network, in circulation through syndication. It is also large enough that proposals for rural "cablefication" are being presented in Congress.

There is the obvious concern that the emphasis on the urban audience may be a disservice to the rural audience if, as common knowledge holds, there are substantial differences between "city slickers" and "country bumpkins".

This report outlines the first of a series of studies concerning the utilization of media by urban and non-urban respondents. It is based on a household survey of 291 non-urban respondents and 283 urban respondents located in the northeast section of Appalachia. By selecting subjects from the same area, regional confounding is controlled although at the sacrifice, in this

case, of urban population size (see Appendix A).

This study explores the differences between subject groups over the entertainment, news, and information functions of the home received mass media (newspapers, magazines, recordings, radio, and television). The information function was distinguished from the news function on the bases of the specificity of the material. News was considered specific to an event; information was general or background material on people, places, or things.

Entertainment Functions

In the appropriate section of the questionnaire, seven items relevant to the entertainment functions of newspapers, magazines, records and tapes, radio and television were presented. These items related to the diversion, activity-seeking, and social aspects of entertainment. The purpose of this measure was not to provide an exhaustive description of entertainment uses, but to be sensitive to differences between urban and non-urban respondents.

The data were analyzed in two major schemes: a) item by item chi square analysis over all media; b) analysis of variance over the ratio of entertainment functions chosen for a given medium by the number possible. This ratio may be considered as a degree of use score. That is, each medium receives higher or lower scores according to the number of entertainment function it serves. Place of residence was used as a control variable in a two factor (residence/medium) design.

The following hypotheses were formulated: a) non-urban respondents will show a greater use of radio in entertainment functions; b) urban respondents will show greater use of print media for entertainment; c) urban respondents will show greater use of records for entertainment; d) urban and non-urban respondents will show no differences in entertainment uses of television. Tests of these hypotheses follow in the order of analytical systems above.

Chi Square Analysis

Table 1 presents the proportion of respondents for each group selecting each medium as the most likely choice for each entertainment function. Significant differences were found on five of the seven entertainment items. Investigation of the responses to these items showed the major portion of the effects to be in the higher use of records and tapes and the lower use of radio by urbans. Urban respondents showed on the average 7.6 per cent higher use of records and tapes and 5.0 per cent lower use of radio. Other average differences were: television, .8 per cent; newspaper, 1.7 per cent; magazines, 1.3 per cent. All of these percentage differences were in favor or non-urban usage.

TABLE 1

| | | Newspaper | Magazines | Records and Tape | Radio | TV | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Amusement | U | .09 | .05 | .10 | .10 | .65 | * |
| | NU | .07 | .06 | .06 | .20 | .61 | |
| Nothing Else to Do | U | .11 | .19 | .11 | .15 | .44 | * |
| | NU | .16 | .17 | .05 | .12 | .50 | |
| Escape Boredom | U | .06 | .15 | .14 | .16 | .49 | |
| | NU | .06 | .11 | .12 | .25 | .47 | |
| Escape Problems | U | .07 | .12 | .23 | .17 | .40 | |
| | NU | .13 | .15 | .10 | .21 | .42 | |
| Escape Loneliness | U | .04 | .08 | .20 | .19 | .49 | |
| | NU | .06 | .13 | .14 | .17 | .50 | |
| Relax | U | .07 | .12 | .26 | .13 | .41 | * |
| | NU | .08 | .13 | .14 | .18 | .47 | |
| Withdraw from Contact | U | .10 | .25 | .22 | .24 | .19 | * |
| | NU | .10 | .30 | .10 | .31 | .18 | |

*Significant $X^2$ at the .05 level

Table 1--Proportion of respondents selecting each medium as the most likely choice for each entertainment function.

These overall percentages can be a bit deceiving as the respondent groups show substantial variation across the functions. Inspection of Table 1 is invited. It is also useful to note that the function for which each medium

scores the highest (modal response) is the same for each respondent group. The modal entertainment function for newspaper is under substitute activity ("Nothing Else to Do"). Relaxation is the highest response for records and tape use. For magazines and radio, it is withdrawal from contact. This latter finding enhances other results indicating radio, unlike television, in a very personal medium. The modal response for television is the amusement function. Television, however, scores relatively high in all functions except withdrawal. This combination of results suggests that television is a very social medium. Individuals are likely to approach television prepared for interpersonal interaction. Content which emphasises social intercourse would be more congruent to the mental set of the audience. Such content would not be as successful on radio, however, where the mental set of the audience is more introspective. Programs which are analytical or experience-sharing in nature would best meet radio's audience.

Entertainment Ratio Scores

Perhaps the most direct way to provide a comparison among media and between the respondent groups is to formulate a single entertainment function score. This score was calculated by taking the number of functions chosen for each medium over the number possible. These scores were analyzed in analysis of variance routines. The means for each medium and respondent group is presented in Table 2. Significant differences are noted. Inspection of Table 2 shows the respondent group differ significantly only on the use given to records and tapes with urbans showing more use as predicted. The difference between the groups or radio usage is in the predicted direction (non-urbans use radio more) but fails to reach significance. No differences are shown for print and television. Generally, Table 2 indicates the respondent groups are quite close in their utilization of media for entertainment.

TABLE 2

| | Urban | Non-Urban |
|---|---|---|
| Newspapers | .07 | .09 |
| Magazines | .13 | .14 |
| Records and Tape | .17 | .09* |
| Radio | .16 | .19 |
| Television | .42 | .42 |
| Critical Difference** | .04 | .04 |

*Significant at the .05 level

**The value at which the difference between any two means in the column becomes significant.

Table 2--Mean entertainment scores for each medium by urban and non-urban respondents.

News Functions

Use of media for local, state, and world news was explored using the procedures outlined under entertainment. Data were analyzed through chi square techniques and analysis of variance. Three hypotheses were formulated: a) Urban respondents will show greater use of print as a news source; b) Non-urban respondents will show greater use of radio as a news source; c) no significant difference will appear between the two groups in the use of television as a news source.

Chi Square Analysis

All three news items showed significant differences between the respondent groups. Table 3 presents the proportions for each medium and each group. Table 3 shows three major results: a) The differences between respondent groups primarily focus on the urban's greater use of print and the non-urban's greater use of radio. Radio plays a significant role in the life of the non-

urban respondent--a role which could easily be enlarged and exploited by increasing local and perhaps state coverage. b) No single medium shows superiority in state news coverage although television approaches it. Since the sample area covers several markets, it appears that the correct content mix for state news has not been found. It also suggests that any of the immediate media are capable of capturing a substantial proportion of the audience with the appropriate mix. c) No medium is consistently the prime source of news for the American public. Prime news source depends on a variety of interacting variables one of which--subject matter--is demonstrated here.

TABLE 3

| | | Newspaper | Magazine | Radio | Television |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| World News | U | .25 | .25 | .03 | .67 |
| | NU | .19 | .03 | .12 | .66 |
| State News | U | .39 | .01 | .10 | .49 |
| | NU | .35 | .02 | .22 | .42 |
| Local News | U | .72 | .00 | .22 | .06 |
| | NU | .60 | .01 | .24 | .16 |

All $X^2$ analyses were significant

Table 3--Percentage of respondents selecting each medium for each news functions.

News Ratio Scores

The news ratio score was computed by taking the number of functions selected for each medium over the number possible. Table 4 presents the mean news ratio scores for each medium and respondent group. Table 4 shows that our three hypotheses were correct. Urbans do make greater use of newspapers; non-urbans of radio; and no differences appear in television.

TABLE 4

| | Urban | Non-Urban |
|---|---|---|
| Newspapers | .43 | .34* |
| Magazines | .02 | .02 |
| Radio | .11 | .17* |
| Television | .38 | .37 |
| Critical Difference | .04 | .05 |

*Significant at the .05 level of confidence

Table 4--Mean news scores for urban and non-urban respondents by each medium.

Information Functions

The four media and two respondent groups were tested over the information function concerning ideas, people, places, and things. The three hypotheses formulated for news also appeared to be applicable here. That is: urbans will make greater use of print for information. Non-urbans will make greater use of radio. No differences will appear in the informational use of television. The data were analyzed as news and entertainment above.

Chi Square Analysis

The individual items and the proportion of respondents from each group selecting each information function for each medium are reported in Table 5.

TABLE 5

| | | Newspapers | Magazines | Radio | Television |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| New Ideas | U | .15 | .60 | .05 | .20 |
| | NU | .18 | .41 | .09 | .32 |
| News about People | U | .35 | .30 | .07 | .28 |
| | NU | .41 | .16 | .08 | .35 |
| New Places | U | .26 | .35 | .07 | .31 |
| | NU | .28 | .21 | .04 | .47 |
| New Products | U | .28 | .21 | .04 | .47 |
| | NU | .24 | .17 | .09 | .51 |

All $X^2$ analyses were significant

Table 5--Percentage of respondents from each group selecting each information function for each medium.

All items produced significant differences in Chi Square analysis.

Inspection of Table 5 reveals that urbans make greater use of print generally and magazines specifically; and non-urbans make greater use of television. Modal responses for each medium were news about people for newspapers, new ideas for magazines, new places for radio, and new products for television.

It must be noted that radio evidences little use as an information source. Purely informational programs on radio face an uphill battle as such content is not within the expectations of the audience.

Information Ratio Scores

Repeating the procedures used above, the information ratio scores were calculated by taking the number of information functions chosen over the number possible. Table 6 presents the means scores and notes the differences between respondent groups and among media which are significant.

TABLE 6

| | Urban | Non-Urban |
|---|---|---|
| Newspapers | .24 | .23 |
| Magazines | .39 | .24* |
| Radio | .06 | .08 |
| Television | .25 | .32* |
| Critical Difference | .05 | .05 |

*Significant at the .05 level

Table 6--Mean information scores for each medium and each respondent group.

The data in Table 6 generally support our first hypothesis that urbans will make greater use of the print media. Only the difference between magazines was significant however. The remaining two hypotheses were not supported. No

significant differences were found between respondent groups on the use of radio; non-urbans showed significantly greater use of television on an informational source. It appears as if television can be exploited as an informational source particularly for relatively low urbanized markets. The fairly heavy response for television for "New Places" raises the specter that the travelogue may not be dead after all.

# APPENDIX A

## METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

The data reported in this monograph were collected from household interviews of 283 urban and 291 non-urban respondents. All respondents resided in the southeastern quadrant of Ohio. Urban respondents were selected from telephone entries in cities of 10,000 population or greater. Not-at-homes were subject to three call-backs. Additional sampling points were randomly selected to provide for contact failures.

For non-urban respondents, unincorporated villages of 1,000 population or less were randomly selected from all such areas in the quadrant which were at least 5 miles from any town of 5,000 or more. Interviewers were instructed to drive to the village and to take the designated road--always the least developed--out of town, and to sample each house beginning one-half mile from the village limits until ten interviews were completed.

APPENDIX B

DESCRIPTIONS OF THE "AVERAGE"

URBAN AND NON-URBAN RESPONDENT

The average urban respondent is under fifty years of age. He is presently married. His religious preference is Protestant, his denomination--Methodist. He has completed at least one year of high school and estimates his average yearly cash income to fall between $3,000 and $9,000. The average urban dweller owns at least one working black and white television set which has UHF capability. He also owns an average of three working radios, one of which is capable of receiving FM signals, and he has a working radio in his automobile. He regularly subscribes to or purchases one newspaper and two magazines. Although he does not have a tape player, he does own a record player of some sort, as well as, recordings.

The average non-urban respondent is also under fifty years of age, and, like the urban dweller, is presently married. He, too, is a Methodist. His education does not extend beyond junior high school and his estimated average yearly cash income falls below $6,000. This non-urban dweller owns one black and white television set capable of receiving only VHF signals. He owns one working radio which does have FM capabilities and has, in addition a working radio in his car. He is a regular subscriber to or purchaser of a single newspaper, but, unlike the urban dweller is neither a subscriber to nor a purchaser of any magazines. He does not own a tape player; however, he does have a record player and some recordings.